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Message Text

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67
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---------- 049794
R 031540Z APR 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY MANILA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: TRIBHUVAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

REFS: (A) STATE 45010 (NOTAL)
(B) 75 MANILA 16265
(C) STATE 068174

1. DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO DETERMINE WHICH OF TWO U.S. FIRMS INVOLVED IN TRIBHUVAN PROJECT USG SHOULD SUPPORT (IF, IN FACT, ANY SUCH SUPPORT IS APPROPRIATE) AND WE REQUIRE EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN MAKING THIS DETERMINATION. REFTEL C NOTED THAT OF TWO U.S. FIRMS INVOLVED IN PROJECT, TIPPETTS, ABBETT, MCCARTHY, AND STRATTON (TAMS) WAS COMPETING ON ITS OWN WHILE TRANSPLAN, INC. WAS COMPETING AS PART OF A FRENCH-ITALIAN CONSORTIUM AND THAT USDOC THEREFORE BELIEVED THAT IT WAS INAPPROPRIATE FOR USG TO SUPPORT TRANSPLAN RATHER THAN TAMS.

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2. MICHAEL SANTORO, TRANSPLAN PRESIDENT, CONTACTED

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DEPARTMENT WEEK OF MARCH 22 TO EXPRESS VIEW THAT TAMS WAS OUT OF RUNNING FOR PROJECT SINCE THEY HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM TOP LISTED FIRMS AS RESULT OF HIGH LEVEL DECISION TO READJUST COMPETITION TO FAVOR CANADIAN FIRM ACRES INT'L. SANTORO'S POINT WAS THAT SINCE TRANSPLAN ONLY U.S. FIRM WHICH STOOD A CHANCE, USG SHOULD PROVIDE IT WHAT SUPPORT IT COULD. SANTORO STATED THAT TAMS REALIZED ITS POSITION AND THAT IT WOULD LIKELY BE WILLING TO BOW OUT AND LET TRANSPLAN CONTINUE TO COMPETE. SANTORO SAID HE WOULD CONTACT TAMS TO HAVE LATTER CONVEY TAMS' POSITION TO DEPARTMENT.

3. FOLLOWING TELCON WITH SANTORO, TAMS REPRESENTATIVES REQUESTED MARCH 26 MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AT WHICH TIME THEY MAINTAINED THAT FIRM CONSIDERS ITSELF VERY MUCH IN RUNNING ON THIS PROJECT. RAY HODGE, ONE OF TAMS PARTNERS, STATED THAT AIRPORT PROJECT CHIEF, H. K. UPADHYAYA, TOLD HODGE ON MARCH 5 THAT TAMS WAS STILL IN RUNNING. HODGE ALSO CLAIMED THAT EMBASSY, WHICH HE LATER VISITED, HAD NO CONTRARY INFORMATION AT THAT TIME.

4. DEPARTMENT REALIZES THAT THIS IS RELATIVELY SMALL PROJECT (15 MILLION DOLS) AND THAT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS MAY MAKE FURTHER EFFORTS IN SUPPORT OF ANY U.S. FIRM INAPPROPRIATE. NEVERTHELESS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE STATUS REPORT ON BIDDING SITUATION AND RECOMMENDATION AS TO WHETHER ANYTHING SHOULD OR CAN BE DONE ON BEHALF OF U.S. FIRMS. IF TAMS STANDS A CHANCE, WE WOULD BE INCLINED TO DO WHATEVER IS APPROPRIATE IN SUPPORT. IF, HOWEVER, EMBASSY CAN VERIFY THAT TAMS IS, IN FACT, OUT OF RUNNING, THEN IT WOULD NOT BE OUT OF ORDER TO LEND ASSISTANCE TO TRANSPLAN AS SUBCONTRACTOR TO EUROPEAN GROUPS. PLEASE ADVISE. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH COUNTRY OFFICER DAVID R. TELLEEN WHO WILL BE IN KATHMANDU WEEK OF APRIL 5.

5. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ADB MAY HAVE ON PRESENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT. KISSINGER

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